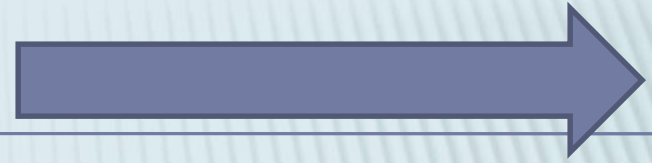


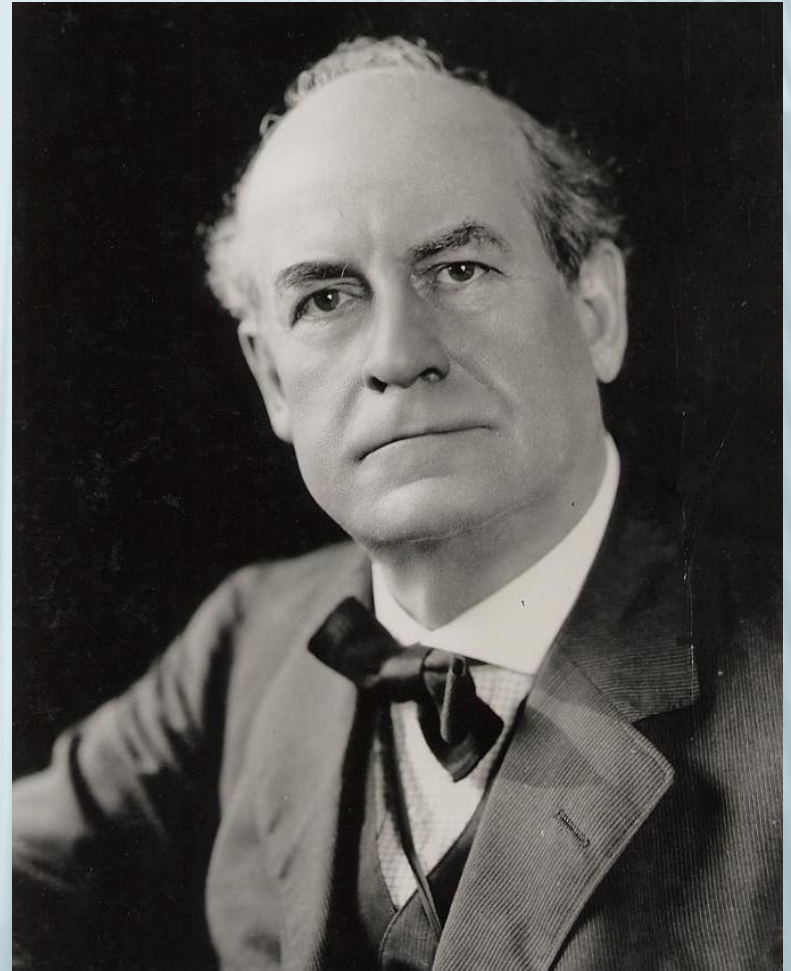
United States History – Populism and Progressivism, 1865 - 1920

THE PROGRESSIVE ERA – REFORMING CAPITALISM, GOVERNMENT, AND SOCIETY

THE POPULISTS OF THE 1890S



Before the Progressives came to dominate American Politics in the 1910s, when all political parties adopted their ideas to some extent, the Populist Party emerged during the 1880s and 1890s. Organized largely by farmers and other groups whose economic future was bound to large corporate banks and railroads – and Eastern politicians, the party sought government regulation to protect ordinary Americans who desired to be self-sufficient, hard-working farmers and laborers.



William Jennings Bryan ran for President of the United States as a Populist three times – but he lost every time.

IDEAS OF THE POPULIST PARTY

- The Party of the “*Common Man*” – devout Christians.
- Favored government regulation of major corporations, especially in banking, transportation, and communication: Banks, Railroads, Telegraph and Telephone companies.
- Favored the Graduated Income Tax (later achieved by the 16th Amendment to the Constitution.)
- Favored an increased money supply – the coinage of silver – in order to increase inflation and cause the easing of debt for the poor.
- Favored political reforms like the secret ballot, the initiative, the referendum, the recall, and the direct election of Senators (later achieved by the 17th Amendment to the Constitution.)

Later in American History, almost all of these policies were adopted and supported by the Progressives – Republicans like Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft; Democrats like Woodrow Wilson, and even Socialist candidates – most famously Eugene V. Debs. By the Election of 1912, these issues were widespread among all political parties and candidates. The Progressive Era in American politics lasted until World War I.

UNIONS AND PROGRESSIVES

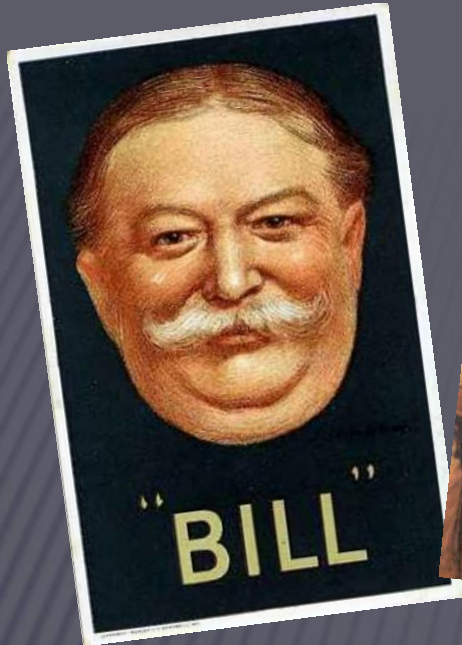


Unions like the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L) and the Knight of Labor were often supporters of Progressive goals, as well, including:

- higher wages for workers.
- the eight hour work day.
- improved safety conditions.
- workman's compensation.
- ending child labor.

Some unions, though, became associated with radicalism – anarchists, socialists, communists, and terrorist tactics – like the Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.), or “Wobblies.”



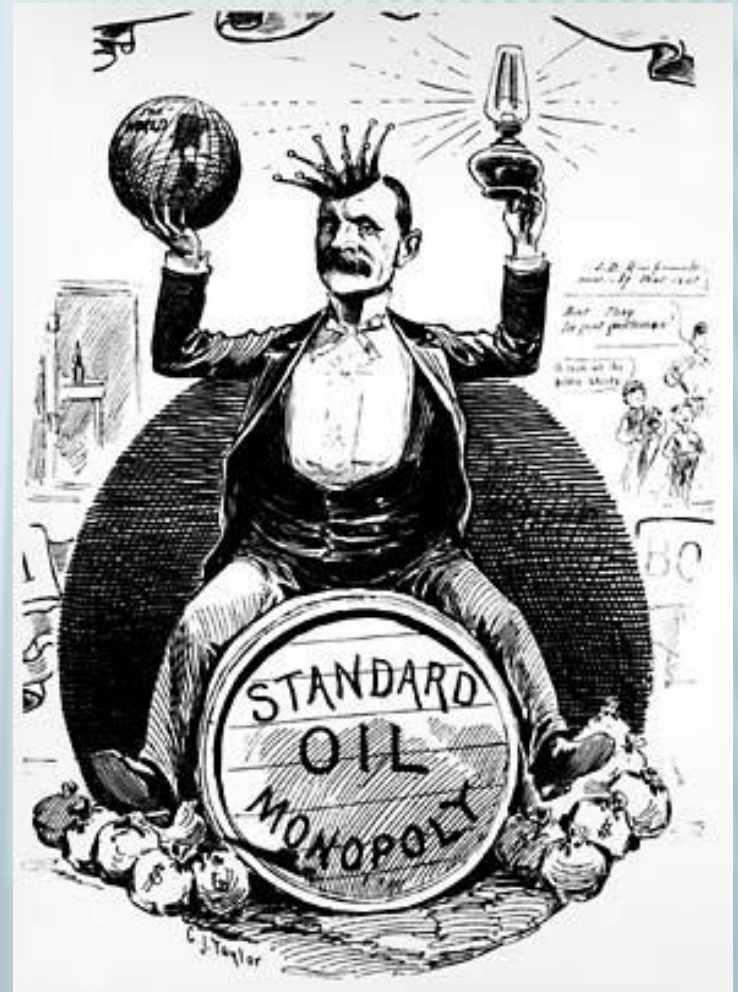


SECTION ONE. THE PEOPLE OF THE PROGRESSIVE ERA AND THEIR BELIEFS

Who are the individuals who sought to change America during the Progressive Era? How did they describe the role of government in making changes to the nation's political, economic, and social structure?

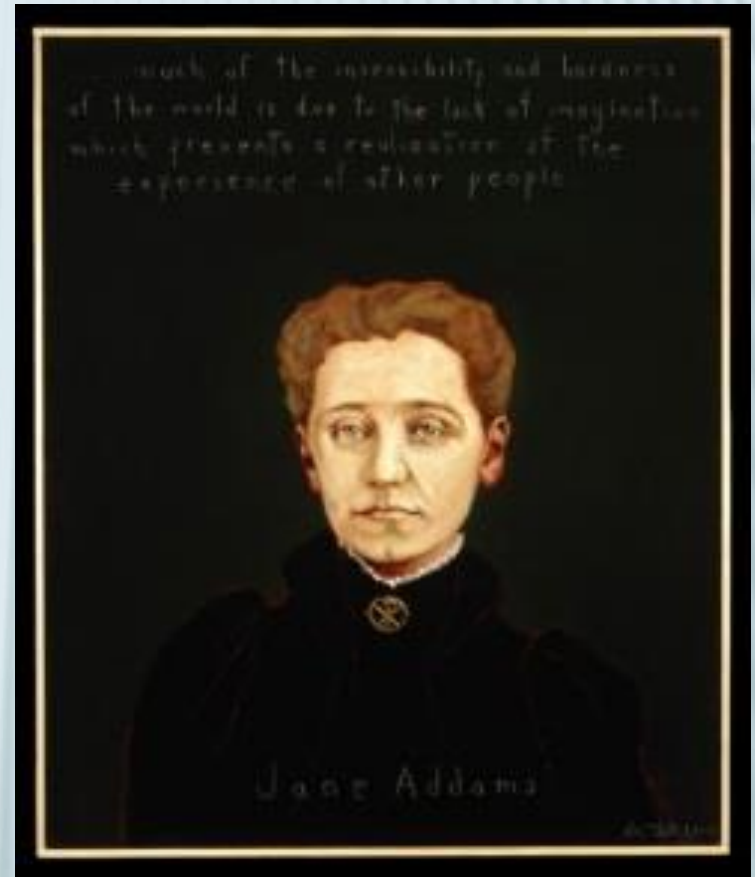
JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER – STANDARD OIL CO.

John D. Rockefeller's company was the most egregious example of what goes wrong when free market capitalism goes completely unregulated. His anti-competitive practices ran other companies out of business and hurt consumers. Ida Tarbell wrote a book, *The History of the Standard Oil Company*, in order to chronicle his illegal practices; Theodore Roosevelt sued the company and had it broken up into smaller, competing companies. Rockefeller, though, maintained his fortune for generations to come.



JANE ADDAMS – HULL HOUSE

Jane Addams devoted herself to a number of important causes in her life – pacifism, socialism, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the lives of immigrant laborers trying to make it in America. She opened Hull House – a settlement house for the poor – in downtown Chicago in the 1880s, to help the poor and immigrants find shelter, job skills, work, and child care during their difficult transition to life in America. Helping those in need was her calling in life.



“Much of the insensibility and hardness of the world is due to the lack of imagination which prevents a realization of the experience of other people.” - *Jane Addams*

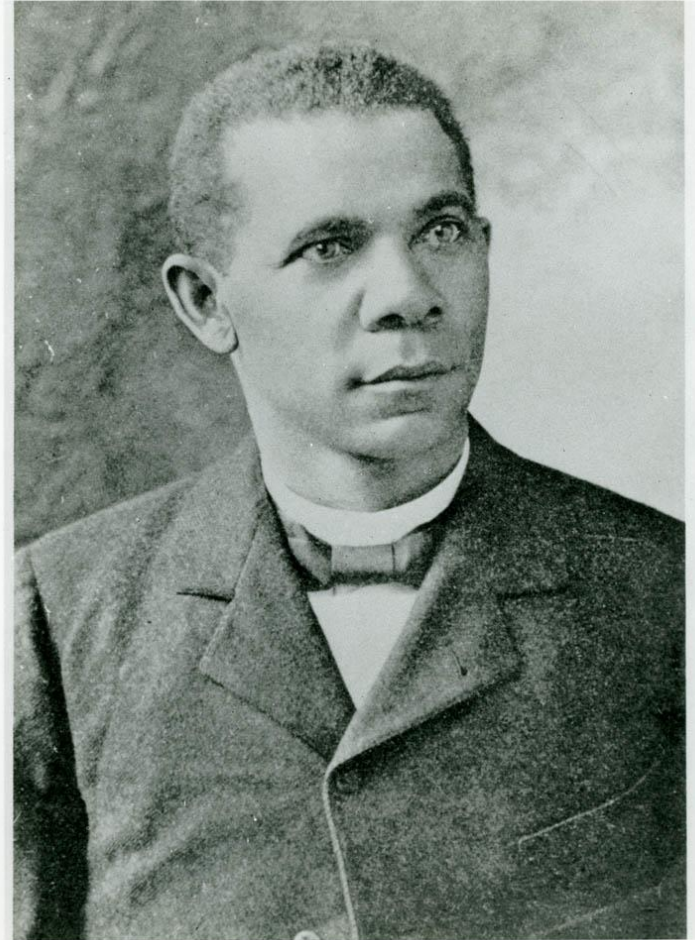
IDA TARBELL'S HISTORY OF THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY

Ida Tarbell was a muckraking journalist who worked for a variety of publications, most famously the magazine McClure's in the late 19th Century and early 1900s. She took on a variety of important topics, but her most famous contribution to progressivism was the publication of the book, *A History of the Standard Oil Company*, which exposed the corrupt practices of John D. Rockefeller and his Oil Trust.



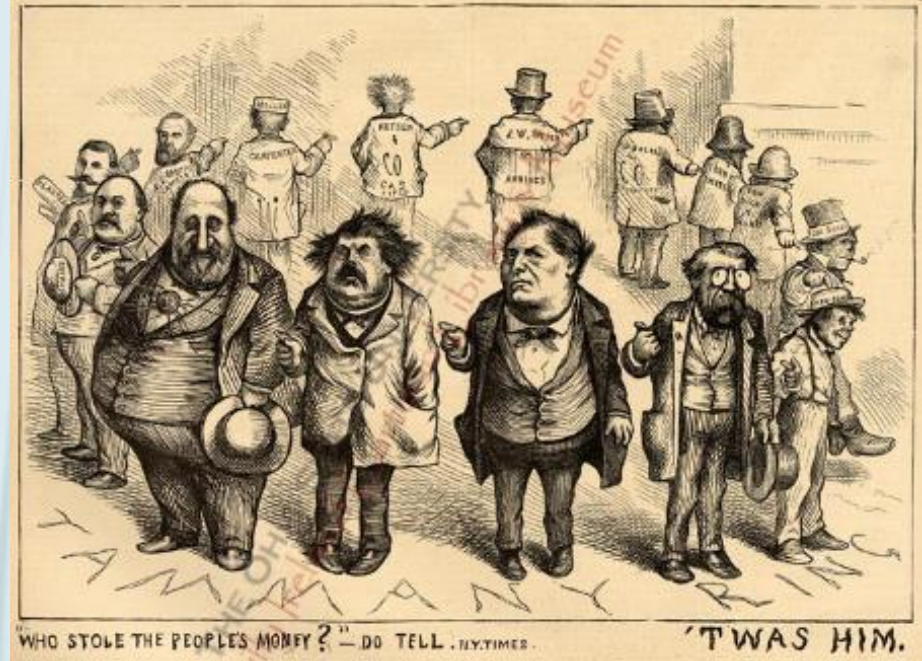
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON - GRADUALISM

Booker T. Washington was one of the most important Civil Rights leaders of the late 19th and early 20th Centuries. He was the founder of Tuskegee Institute and author of the book *Up From Slavery*, which advised African-Americans to seek education and vocational skills before they demanded social and economic equality. Booker T. Washington's advocacy of "gradualism" – the idea that African-Americans must accept segregation for a period of time before they could demand equality, was railed against and criticized by other African-American leaders, most notably W.E.B. DuBois. It is important to remember, however, that Washington lived in the segregated South. There, the failure of the federal government to guarantee equal rights under the law and due process had led to an apartheid system. In the South, violence against African-Americans by the Ku Klux Klan and other vigilante groups was commonplace and always went unpunished. Indeed, Washington feared for his life and the lives of his most devoted followers.



THOMAS NAST – POLITICAL CARTOONIST

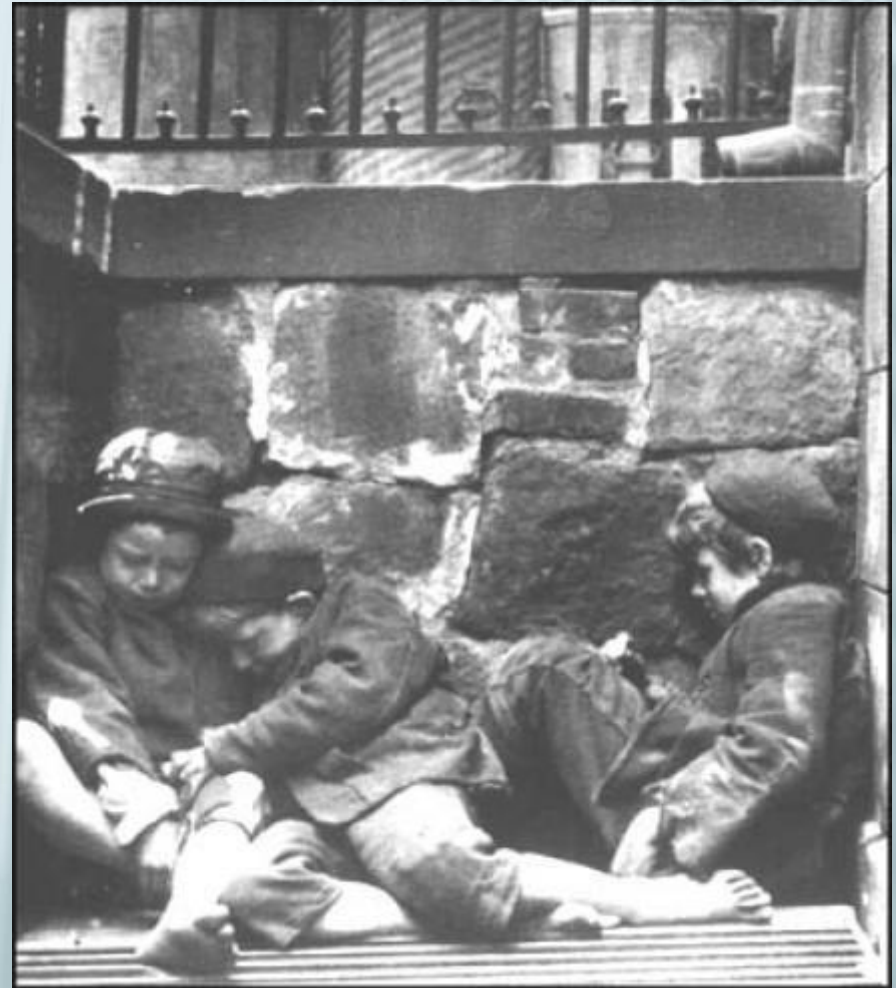
Thomas Nast was the most famous political cartoonist of the 19th Century, and a pioneer of the field in many ways. Since many Americans were either illiterate or read at a very low level, cartoons could often shift the nature of debate. Nast was most famous for cartoons that criticized local government in New York, like corrupt political boss William “Boss” Tweed of Tammany Hall.



In his most famous political cartoon, “T’was Him!” Nast correctly pointed out that everyone in local government was involved with accepting bribes and kickbacks, thereby robbing the taxpayers of their money. But “Boss” Tweed was the largest crook!

JACOB RIIS – HOW THE OTHER HALF LIVES

A Danish immigrant who had mastered the art of photography, Riis put his talents to work chronicling the lives of the poor in major cities – particularly the impoverished immigrant children of New York. He argued that equal opportunity could not exist in a society that allowed children to grow up unsupervised, uneducated, and hungry. Living wages and taxpayer funded public schools were just a couple of the solutions he supported to provide for the welfare of this disadvantaged youth. His photo essay *How the Other Half Lives* is probably his most famous work.



SUSAN B. ANTHONY – WOMAN’S SUFFRAGE

Suffrage is the right to vote, and Susan B. Anthony was entirely devoted to gaining suffrage for women in the late 19th Century. She was once arrested for casting a ballot during an election in New York State, and she was a tireless advocate for women’s rights. Although she never lived to see the day when women could vote in national elections – the 19th Amendment did not pass until 1919, long after her death – she did inspire an entire generation of woman suffragists to keep fighting for equality and voting rights in the United States.



WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT

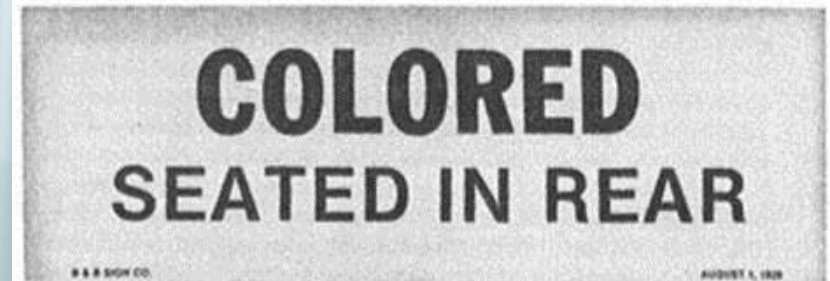
William Howard Taft is one of the most accomplished men in all American history – a former Governor of the Philippines, Secretary of War, and the only man in US History to serve as President of the United States and as a Supreme Court Justice. Taft was a Progressive leader in the mold of Theodore Roosevelt, breaking up more trusts in four years than TR had in seven. But the two men eventually became rivals, and the schism in the Republican Party would lead to the election of Woodrow Wilson in 1912.

Unfortunately, today Taft is better known for his considerable heft – he weighed well over 350 pounds during various portions of his life – and for his perhaps apocryphal story of being stuck in the White House bathtub...



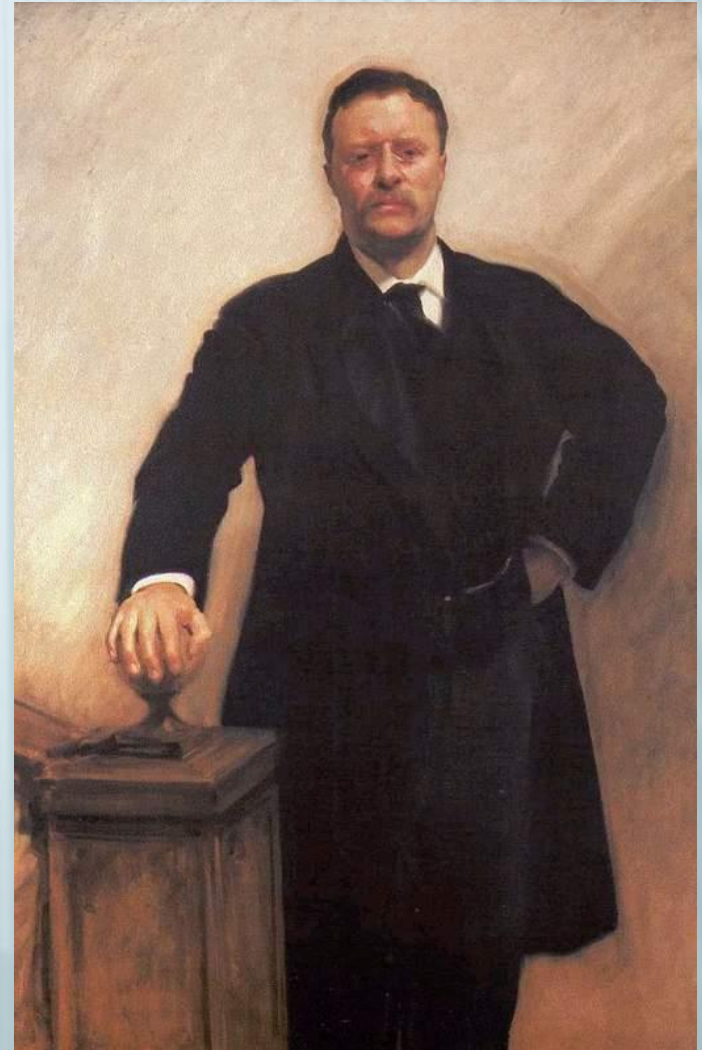
THE CASE OF *PLESSY V. FERGUSON*

Even during the height of the Progressive Era, “Jim Crow” laws, segregation, and discrimination define life in America. The greatest failure of the Progressive Era was its disregard for the rights of minorities, particularly African-Americans, Native Americans, Asians, and Latinos across the United States. Broad support for the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Plessy V. Ferguson* – which upheld segregation as long as public institutions were “separate but equal” – led to the promotion of racism, discrimination, violence, and apartheid in many places in the United States.



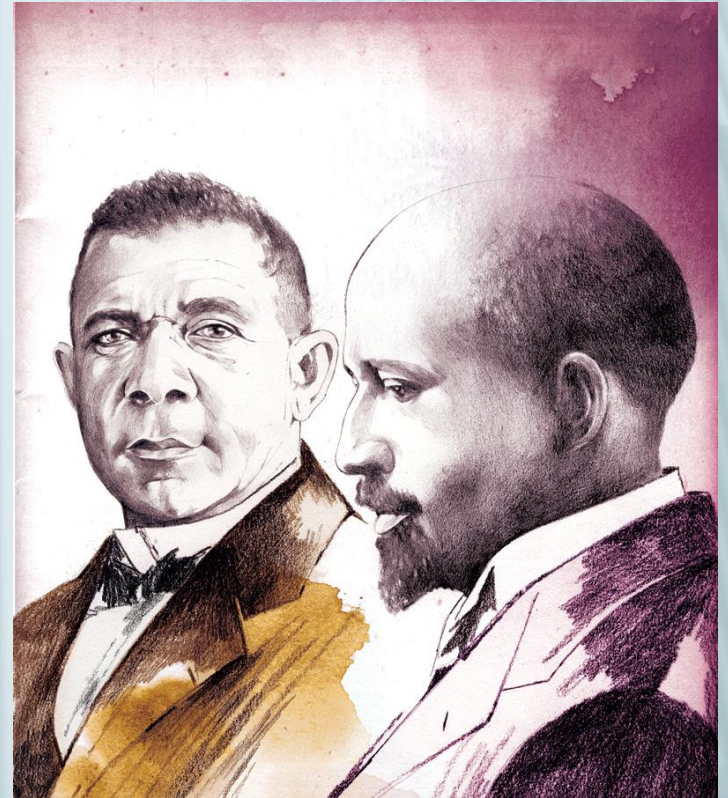
PRESIDENT THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Theodore Roosevelt was by far the most progressive of the Progressive Presidents. He favored the rights of workers and the rights of consumers, going so far as to side with Unions during the Anthracite Coal Strike of 1902 and to sue corporations in violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. In addition, he favored woman's rights, conservation of natural resources through environmentalism, and a host of other political reforms to empower voters with the ability to control their elected representatives. He called his progressive agenda "The Square Deal" and was known as a "Trustbuster" for suing anti-competitive trusts and monopolies like John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil Trust.



W.E.B. DUBOIS – FOUNDER OF THE N.A.A.C.P.

William Edward Burghart DuBois – W.E.B., was a leading intellectual leader among African-Americans across several generations. He was a graduate of Harvard University, the author of *The Souls of Black Folk*, and the leading member of the NAACP for many years. DuBois, who also founded the Niagara Movement, demanded immediate political, economic, and social equality for African-Americans. He considered gradualism a form of compromise with an evil system. DuBois was forever frustrated with the slow movement of leaders confronting racism and segregation, and championed a much more forceful activism. He insisted that the “Talented Tenth” of African-Americans must lead their people in a movement towards equal rights.

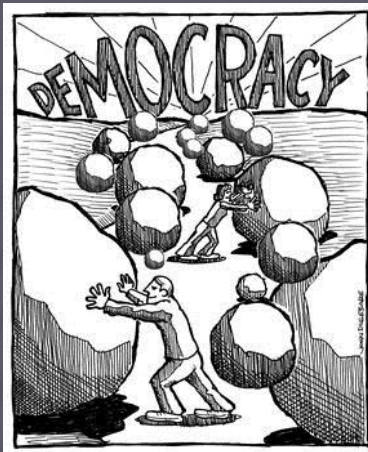
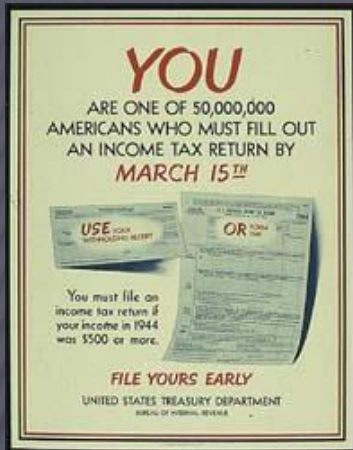


W.E.B. DuBois, to the right, was a bitter rival of Booker T. Washington, to the left. Both men, however, sought greater rights for African Americans in the United States.

UPTON SINCLAIR – AUTHOR, SOCIALIST

Upton Sinclair's most famous novel was *The Jungle* – a story of an immigrant family which was torn apart attempting to find the American Dream in the rough and tumble slums of Chicago at the turn of the century. Sinclair claimed that in the novel, he had “aimed for American's hearts, but hit them in the stomach.” The novel he wrote exposed the filthy conditions in the meatpacking industry and inspired important reforms like the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Meat Inspection Act.





THE PROGRESSIVE AMENDMENTS

16th Amendment – Progressive Income Taxes: Wealthy Pay More Than The Poor!

17th Amendment – The Direct Election of Senators.

18th Amendment – The Prohibition Amendment

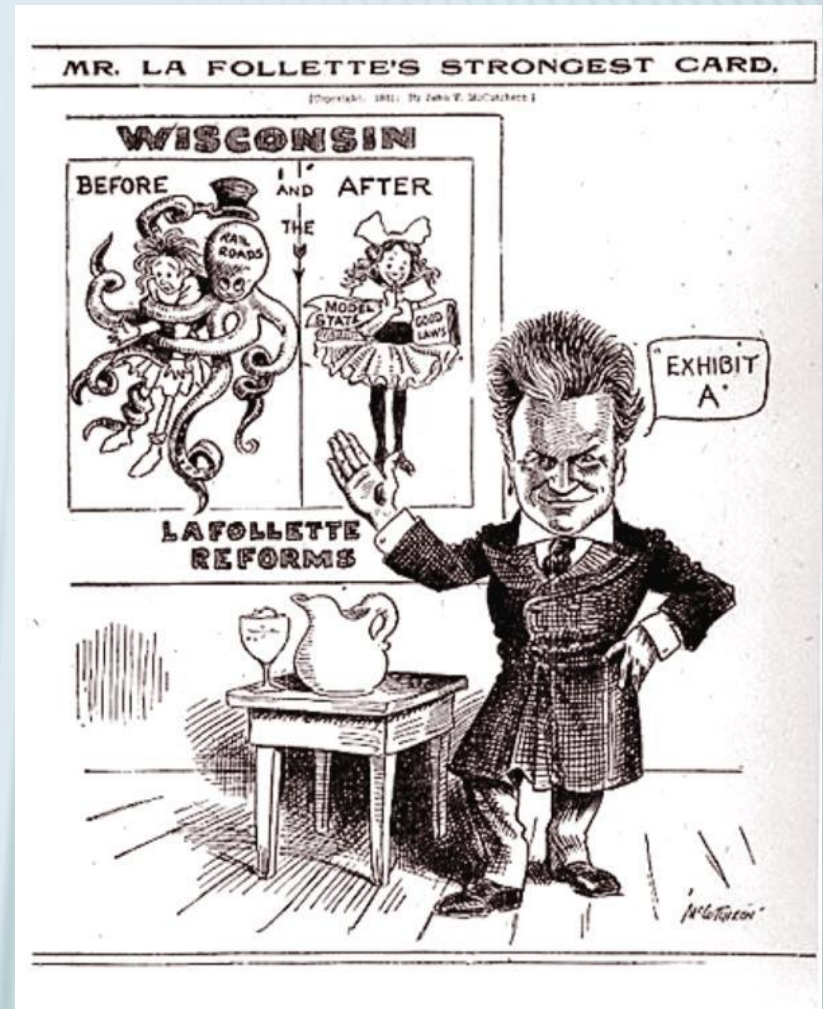
19th Amendment – Woman's Suffrage

It may be a little peculiar to think of taxation as a progressive reform at first, however, the purpose of the **graduated income tax** was to provide a more equitable way to tax the public. People who earned the most money in society would be taxed at a much higher rate than the poorest members of society – who could least afford to pay taxes. Poor workers needed as much of their money as possible to provide for basic needs like food and shelter. Wealthier Americans, who benefited from society the most, could better afford to pay a higher percentage of taxes.



THE 16TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION – FEDERAL INCOME TAX

Before the year 1913, United States Senators were not elected by the general public. They were elected by state legislatures for the most part. This meant that here in Virginia, for example, the General Assembly would select our US Senators. Voters selected members of the House of Delegates and the States Senators, but were shut out of the process when it came time to select the US Senator. In order to increase democratic participation, the 17th Amendment provided for the direct election of U.S. Senators. The result of this change is that large campaigns now take place for members of the U.S. Senate; however, much less attention is paid to the elections for local government officials – who probably have more direct influence over our lives!



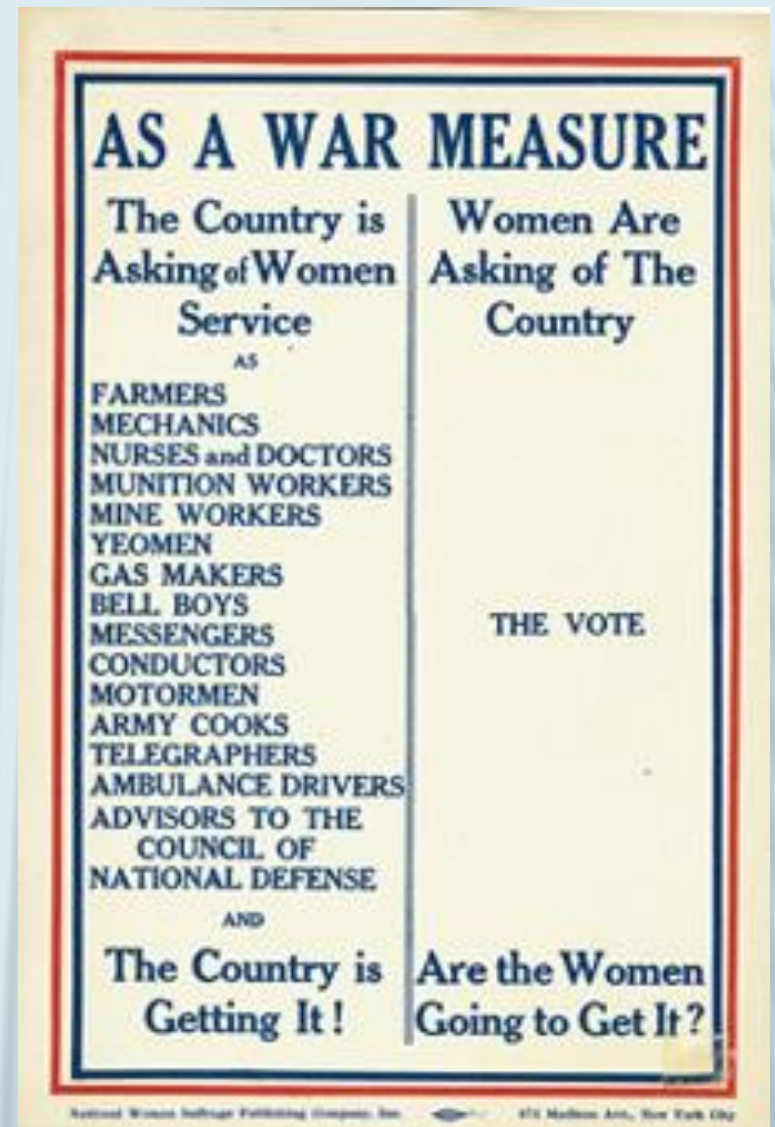
THE 17TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION – THE DIRECT ELECTION OF SENATORS

Groups like the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) – and individuals like the infamous Carry Nation – championed the cause of **Prohibition**. Alcoholism was a huge problem in the United States during the 19th Century – even more so than it is today. Men who wasted the family's money on booze – and then came home to abuse their wives and children – caused damage to society. When World War I began, and there was a need to save grain to send to Europe for the soldiers and refugees, the damage of alcoholism was even more pronounced. Prohibition, however, did little to alleviate these problems, and caused another set of concerns: lawlessness, gangsters, and violence. Prohibition was repealed in 1933 by the 21st Amendment.



**THE 18TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION: PROHIBITION
REPEALED IN 1933 BY THE 21ST AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION...**

The first time American woman demanded the right to vote was with the publication of the *Declaration of Sentiments* in 1848 – the product of the Seneca Fall Convention. For decades women had demanded the right to vote, but it was the service of women during World War I – a war which many women opposed – which helped to secure suffrage rights for the largest “minority” group in the United States. The 19th Amendment is the most important moment in the history of the democratization of the United States. ***Women – 51% of the population – now had the right to vote in national elections.*** The Election of 1920 marked the first time women had participated in a national campaign.



THE 19TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION: WOMAN'S SUFFRAGE

BY 1905, STANDARD OIL CONTROLLED 75% OF ALL CRUDE OIL refined in America. As the nation's primary source for kerosene used in lamps, it had a stranglehold on the business of selling oil for illumination. *The Standard Oil Trust had America over a barrel!*



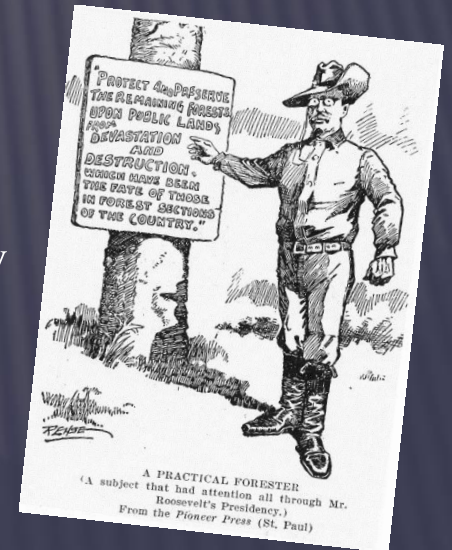
GOVERNMENT SUES STANDARD OIL TRUST

Under our *trustbusting* President Roosevelt, the U.S. Department of Justice brought suit against the directors of Standard Oil and its subsidiaries. With at least one such subsidiary located within the area of the 8th Circuit's jurisdiction, the case – *United States v. Standard Oil Co. of New Jersey* – was filed and decided here. The 8th Circuit Court made national headlines in 1909 when it ordered the dissolution of the Standard Oil Trust – in effect *busting* it into dozens of smaller companies, leveling the playing field for would-be competitors.



PROGRESSIVE ERA VOCABULARY

Terms and Identifications Related to the Progressive Era in American History



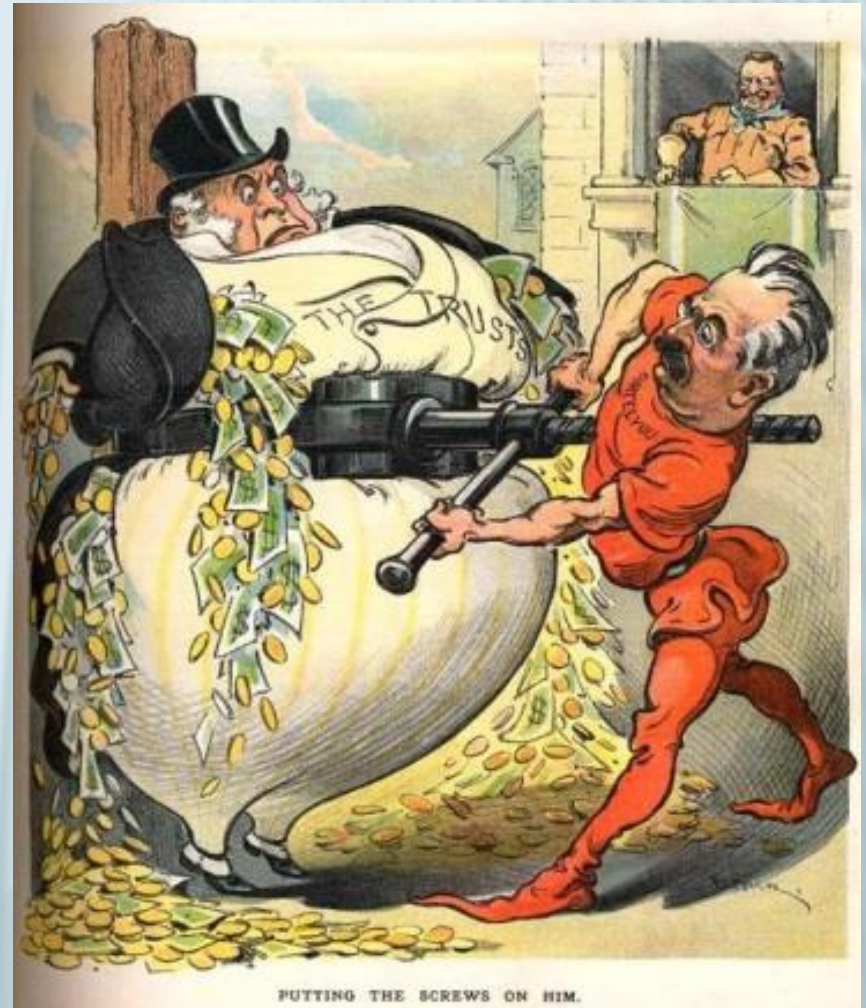
THE N.A.A.C.P – NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE.

The NAACP was established in 1908 by over a dozen co-founders; however, W.E.B. DuBois was most critical to the civil rights organization. The NAACP established a legal fund which successfully challenged segregation laws, ending “Jim Crow” laws in the South by eventually winning the case of Brown V. Board of Education (NAACP lawyer Thurgood Marshall helped to win the case – using tactics devised by his mentor, Charles Hamilton Houston.) During the Civil Rights Era, NAACP leaders like Rosa Parks, Roy Wilkins, and Julian Bond were essential to the success of the movement.



TRUSTBUSTERS: TR, TAFT, AND WILSON

President who made it their purpose to strictly enforce the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and the Clayton Anti-Trust Act were called “trustbusters.” Presidents Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Woodrow Wilson were the most active trustbusting Presidents, filing suit against hundreds of corporations that acted in ways that undermined competition in the economy and hurt consumers. This earned them the hatred of the so-called Great Industrialists, who favored laissez-faire economics and resented any government regulation!





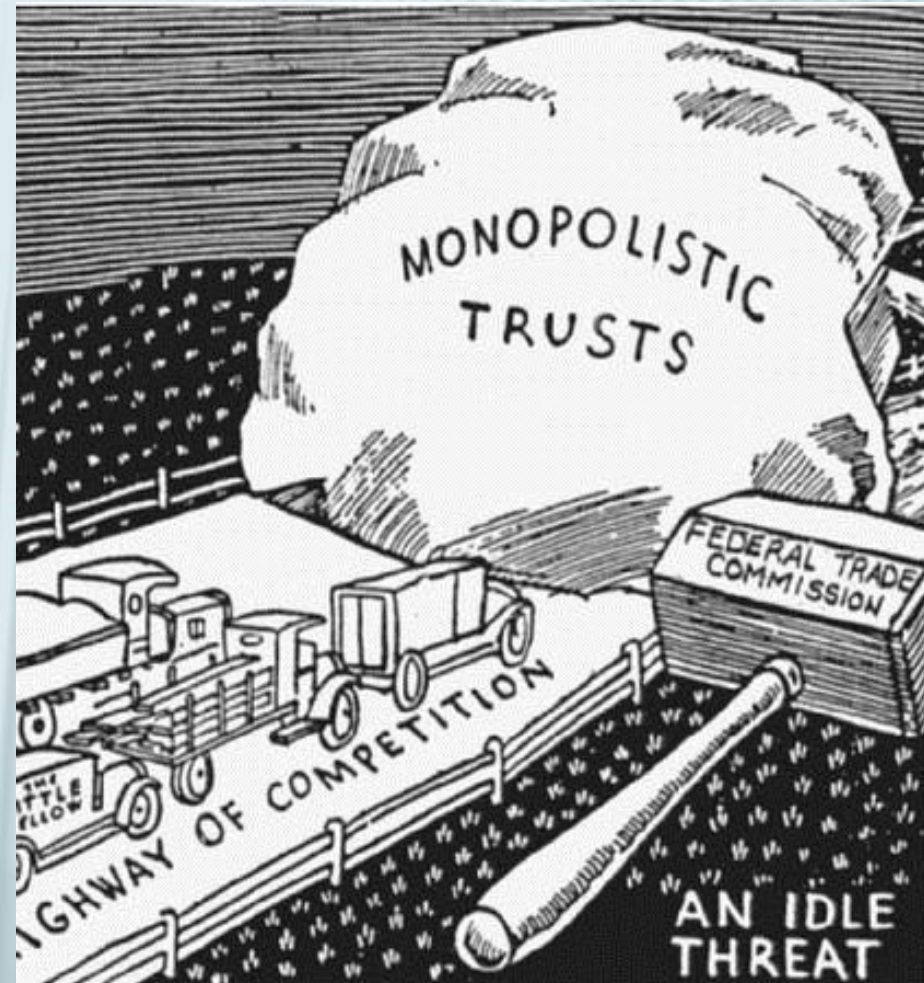
SETTLEMENT HOUSES

The most famous settlement house in the United States was Hull House, established by Jane Addams in 1886. There were dozens of others, though. Essentially, these facilities provided the urban poor with shelter, food, vocational skills, and even child care as families made the transition from poverty to being self-sufficient. Thousands of immigrant families benefited from Hull House.



THE SHERMAN ANTI-TRUST ACT OF 1890

Although this law was largely ignored by the federal courts when it was first passed in 1890, it would become the most effective law on the books to break up trusts and monopolies when Theodore Roosevelt order his Attorney General to sue companies like the Northern Securities Trust, Armour Meats, and The Standard Oil Company using the law during his Presidency. Eventually, he won.



SUFFRAGE: THE RIGHT TO VOTE IN ELECTIONS

Women first demanded the right to vote in 1848 with the Declaration of Sentiments. Then, it was Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott who led the woman's movement. Susan B. Anthony introduced more radical tactics later in history; however, it was not until 1919 that women finally succeeded in ratifying the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, granting women the right to vote in all national elections. In the Election of 1920, the collective voice of woman was heard for the first time in a national election.

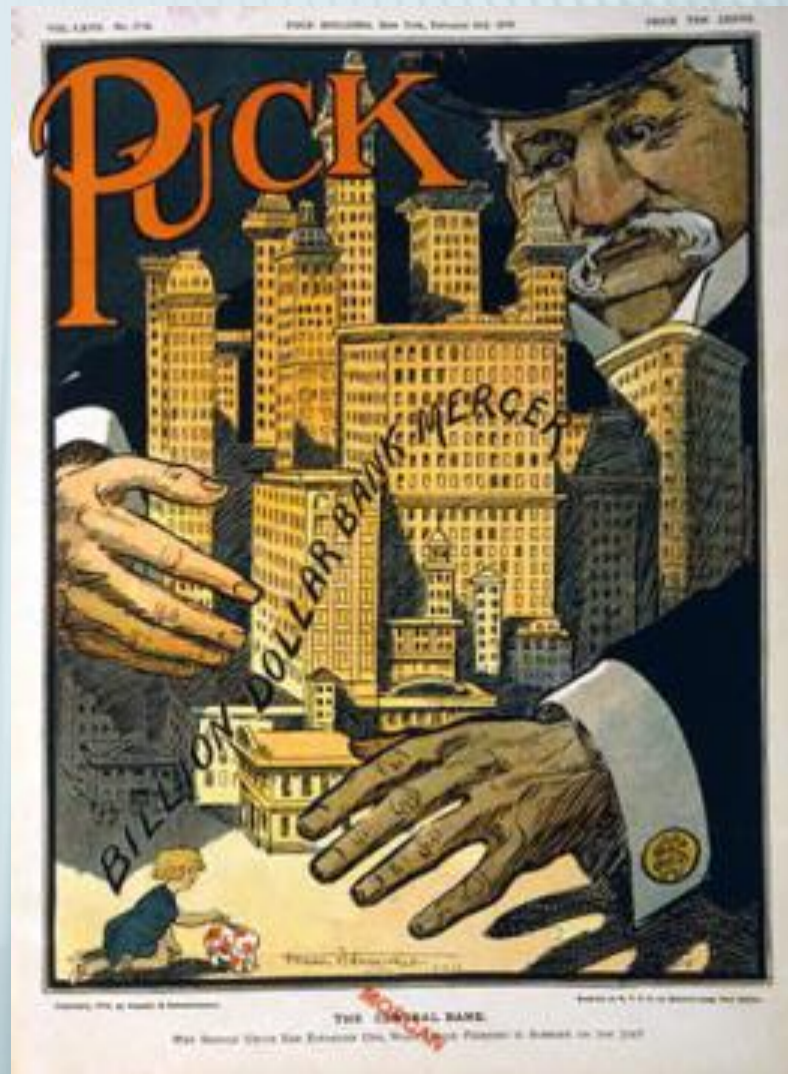


THE LAST FEW BUTTONS ARE ALWAYS THE HARDEST.

—Chapin in the St. Louis Star.

THE CLAYTON ANTI-TRUST ACT OF 1914

In 1914 Congress voted to strengthen existing laws against anti-competitive practices. Some corporations had found loopholes in the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890, and this act made it easier for the U.S. Government to convict companies of crimes which hurt consumers. It banned mergers and special discounts for large companies who were seeking to eliminate their rivals, reduce competition, and raise prices. Financial leaders who owned trusts, like J.P. Morgan, the Rockefeller family, or other industrialists of the Gilded Age, opposed the law.



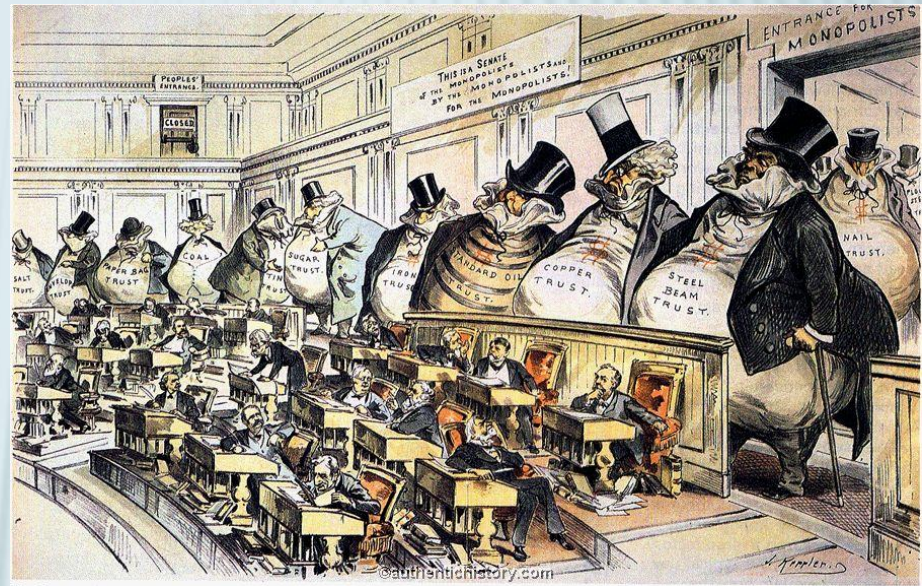
THE MEAT INSPECTION ACT OF 1906

After reading *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair, President Theodore Roosevelt was literally sick to his stomach. The depictions of filth, spoiled meat, and contamination by rats and chemicals in the meatpacking industry convinced Roosevelt that reforms were needed. Two laws passed quickly: The Pure Food and Drug Act, which established the FDA and required for all of the ingredients of products for sale to be listed on the container; and the Meat Inspection Act, authorizing the United States Department of Agriculture to inspect meatpacking plants for cleanliness for the benefit of the public's health. Look for the USDA Approved label on your next purchase from the Meat Department!



RECALLS – GIVING VOTERS GREATER POWER

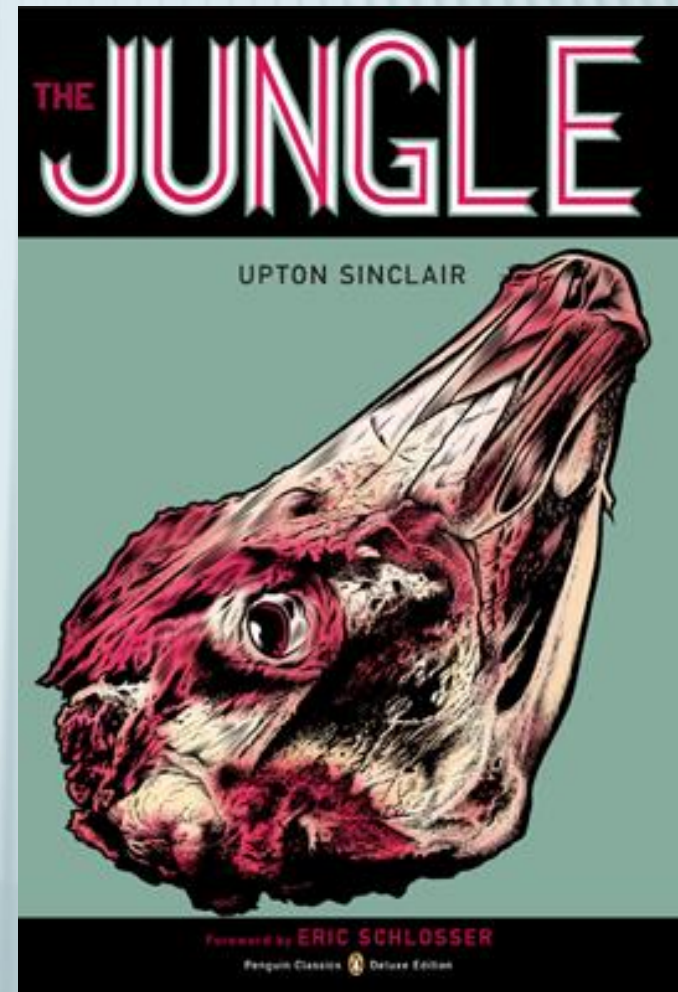
The recall election is a method of removing corrupt leaders from office. Whenever elected leaders are convicted of crimes or when elected leaders prove themselves disingenuous in the way they have represented themselves, recall elections can be held. Essentially, an election is held in reverse. If a majority of voters support the recall, an elected official can be removed from office and replaced.



The recall was just one of a host of laws passed by Progressives to limit the power of elected officials and restore power to the voters. If an elected leader proved to be corrupt, they could now be removed.

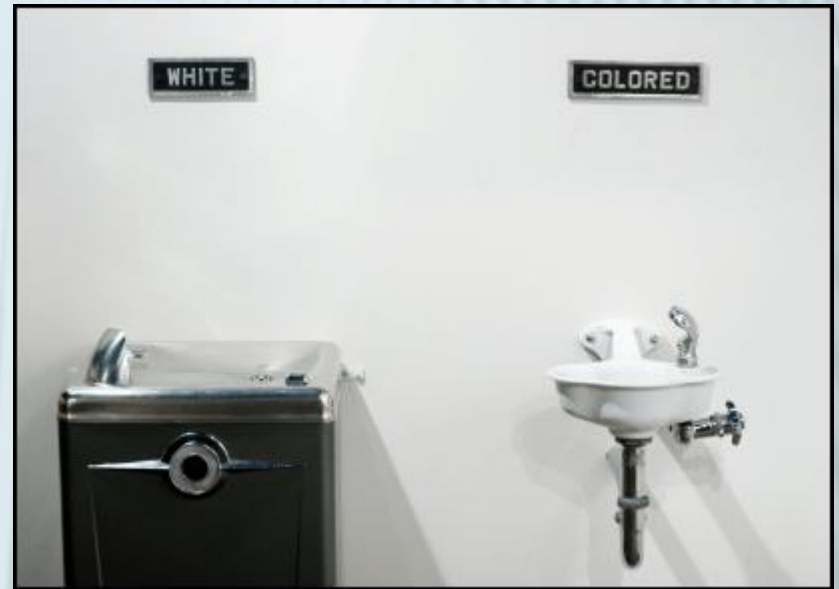
MUCKRAKERS – JOURNALISTS ON A MISSION

Muckrakers were progressive journalists who sought to identify problems in society, bring them to the public's attention through articles, photo-essays, books, and novels, and propose solutions to the problems. Most muckrakers believed that the government had a strong role to play in insuring economic justice, eliminating political corruption, and maintaining social equality in the United States. Some worked in cooperation with public officials; others wanted to expose the crimes of elected officials to the voters.



RACIAL SEGREGATION: DISCRIMINATION

The ruling in the case of *Plessy V. Ferguson* (1896) stated that segregation was legal, as long as the institutions created were “separate but equal.” Since the federal government refused to step in to protect the rights of minorities which should have been guaranteed by the 14th Amendment, a system of apartheid and violent repression of African-Americans and other minority groups was perpetuated in the United States. Until the case of *Brown V. Board of Education, Topeka, KS*, this would persist in the United States.



Perhaps the greatest failure of the Progressive Era was the inability of the reformers of the period to address racial segregation and discrimination in America. In fact, the problems with race relation got consistently worse.

CONSERVATION: SUSTAINABILITY OF RESOURCES

Theodore Roosevelt was probably the first American President to articulate the idea of sustainability of resources. He admired the naturalist and conservationist John Muir, who proposed that national parks be established to protect the environment – so that national treasures like Yosemite, the Grand Canyon, or Crater Lake might be preserved for future generations. TR was not opposed to mining for natural resources! But he did insist that resources be excavated in a way that would preserve the natural environment – and the resources of the nation – for future generations.

